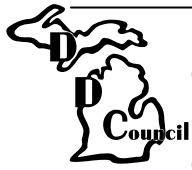


The



MondayUpdate

June 2007

Published by the
Michigan Developmental Disabilities Council,
1033 S. Washington, Lansing, MI 48910
www.michigan.gov/ddcouncil

Housing: it's out there but you need to be both patient and assertive

People with disabilities who want to live in an affordable apartment or house have several different paths to explore going after that goal.

For anyone seeking affordable housing, money can be an important factor. So can learning the steps to take along the paths to find housing and pay for it, according to Nelson Grit, who works on the DD Council's Finding Our Way Home grant for the Michigan Disability Rights Coalition (MDRC).

For some with disabilities, says Grit, money may be available in the form of subsidies such as a voucher to help cover the considerable expense of a rent or house payment.

Subsidies that are most common are the Section 8 voucher and individual voucher. The federal government finances section 8 vouchers. The government sets the standards for the housing and is responsible for much of the paperwork. Where you live is your choice, but the place must meet some standards.

According to Grit, “it’s called Section 8 because the regulations for this kind of voucher come from that section of the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) rule book. Section 8 vouchers are good for either project housing, such as public housing at one location, or scattered housing under one management. The housing has to be approved by HUD agencies. Basically, if you have a voucher, it is good for the rent on your place.”

An individual, or portable, voucher can be used for any apartment, house, townhouse, etc. The owner of the housing complex, apartment building, etc., must be willing to accept the voucher. Other than that requirement, you can live anywhere you choose and can afford.

A wait may be in the cards

Sound good? It is, certainly, but in some cases there may be a catch. There may not be enough money for all the people who want a voucher, so they may have to go on a waiting list until more money becomes available. Sometimes, in some places, this waiting period can be five years.

Some apartment owners tend to favor senior citizens; you may need to be at least age 62 in some places. Or 55-years-old with a disability.

Another concept is supported housing. When a developer builds an apartment complex, he or she can apply for low-income tax credits in exchange for renting to people with low incomes. Besides the tax break for the owner, a case manager from an agency – Community Mental Health, Center for Independent Living, etc. - acts as a go-between and insures that the apartment owner provides all the necessary services and the apartment renter pays his or her rent on time. It’s a good deal for everybody.

How do you start the process looking for housing? Where do you start jumping through the hoops? Your journey could be begin by going to the Council grant’s website at MDRC. The address is www.copower.org. Click on Affordable/Accessible Housing on the left hand panel.

(If you do not have access to a computer with an Internet connection, check with your local Regional Interagency Consumer Committee (RICC) chair; it’s likely more than one RICC member has a computer. Or, call your local library. Most libraries have computers hooked to the web and will be glad to help you access the Co-power website.)

At Copower's housing page, you'll find instructions for contacting the five resources centers that have been established to help people with disabilities finding suitable housing.

The web site also has information on other housing sources and articles on accessibility, legal resources, and affordability.

Rentlinx can help

Another very useful tool on MDRC's web site is a link to Rentlinx. This service provides you with current information on available rental properties in the city of your choice. You specify the minimum number of bedrooms and maximum amount of rent and where you'd like to live...Rentlinx tells you what's available.

To get information about your county, there is a list of contacts on the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) website, www.michigan.gov/mshda. Clicking on the heading "Housing Agents By County" produces a list of contacts for each. When you arrive at the MSHDA website, you'll find a wealth of other housing information. Check out "How To Find A Place To Live," "Subsidized Housing" and "Rental Assistance."

Grit says a series of informational workshops are being created to inform consumers about housing options. Presently a workshop is being organized in Kalamazoo with others in the planning stages. Contact Grit at MDRC for more information. The toll-free number is 1-800-760-4600.

If you have some money – not necessarily a lot of money - you may consider buying a home. This opens up another entire set of processes and procedures beyond just renting an apartment. The best thing to do is contact Grit at the number above for a list of resources, or call MSHDA.

As a state agency, MSHDA may be able to also help you find rental opportunities, or at the least local resources that can provide information for your area.

The DD Council is playing an important part in addressing housing shortages in the state. While it's listed in the Council's Five-Year Strategic

Plan as a separate item, the statewide project Finding Our Way Home backs up a series of local projects designed to “create centers of expertise in housing development....”

Active Council housing grants

Those local Council-supported grant projects include:

Housing Unlimited – Allegan Community Mental Health is bringing together housing resources in Allegan County. Banks will be included. A permanent housing task force will be created.

Finding Our Way Home Initiative – The Lakeshore Center for Independent Living in Holland will work with community partners to develop a center of expertise. Objective is to inform families and people with disabilities about area housing opportunities.

Detroit Housing Resource Center – Southwest Counseling Solutions, working with a list of collaborators, is creating the Housing Resource Center. This resource will coordinate funding and activities to provide affordable and accessible housing opportunities.

Unlocking the Door in Livingston County – The ARC Livingston intends to increase community awareness for the need for affordable, supportive housing. Work includes presentations to civic groups, outreach to landlords, and tenant education.

Navigating Choices in Housing – Disability Advocates of Kent County will create its own center of housing expertise and work with local housing providers and developers.

While resources for finding suitable housing may seem slim at this time, as you can see the Council – through its grant projects and Housing Work Group - is working hard to change that fact.

Some personal advice from Council members

Affordable and accessible housing; where do you begin?

The journey toward your own affordable and accessible place to live has to start somewhere.

For each person who finally gets their own apartment or house, there is a story that involves a variety of government offices, paperwork, and patience.

A number of DD Council members live in their own place. Here are three of those stories:

Andre Robinson, Council chair – He moved into an apartment in Detroit last year and loves the independence.

After applying for housing, he was living with his parents and waited for 18 months under a program that has him use a portion of his income for rent.

Getting a place to live was part of Robinson's person-centered plan. He says an individual starting out should "get with a managed care provider through Community Mental Health." He heard through the local Center for Independent Living that an apartment was available and they helped him start the paperwork for the apartment management. "They're pretty thorough. They want to see all your financial records, everything," Robinson recalls. The process included a visit with a social worker "to make sure this is really what you want to do."

Robinson advises those just starting out to "call every agency you can think of, but first call the CMH and start a person-centered plan. If you have a plan but haven't put housing in it, do it now. Make sure you get a facilitator who knows how to help you get an apartment.

"If you can, get somebody to help you who really has your best interests in mind. I had a lot of people to help me because I just asked them. That's a good sign of independence."

Robin Sefton, Ann Arbor - She first got a Section 8 Waiver some 11 years ago and lived in a one-bedroom apartment. She was able to get a place in the same complex where she was living with her family.

She says she first called “the Section 8 office in Detroit and got on the waiting list for a voucher.” She had friends who already had vouchers, knew the process, and she asked them for help.

Sefton says she considers herself one of the lucky ones because she only had to wait two years on the list. At that time, she was asked to fill out more paperwork, then told to wait another six months. “They asked me to come to the office in Detroit where I completed all these forms. They wanted to know literally everything about me.”

Once she was in her apartment, one of the few negatives she experienced about it all was the six-month inspection. “Not only do they look at the apartment itself – is there any lead in the paint, etc. -” she says, “but they also look at your lifestyle, even how good a housekeeper you are. You can be cited by the inspector for not being organized!”

Her advice for those just starting on the path to accessible and affordable housing: Hold on to your Section 8 Voucher at all costs.

Theresa Arini – She lived in an apartment complex in Hamtramck that offered housing to people with disabilities based on the complex’s building loan. A certain portion of the complex’s apartments was devoted to vouchers, another to those with a medium income who could afford below-market rent rates. “These places, because of how they were built and the money used to build them have HUD guidelines about who they rent to. And often these apartments are completely accessible.”

Arini had help and encouragement from family members and friends in locating suitable housing. “Tell everyone you know that you are looking for a place,” she advises. “People are usually willing to help you.”

As for a Section 8 voucher, Arini always found a long waiting list so she never signed up. She needed to move closer to her supports and hoped a voucher would become available, but it didn’t happen. Instead, “I got a list from the Center for Independent Living of all the Section 8 and other subsidized housing in the area I wanted to move to. This allowed me to

apply directly to the apartment companies and I put my name on all the lists.

“That doesn’t mean you should apply for a Section 8 voucher. Use every means available to help you find that place to live.”

Arini now lives in a new complex in Holly that was built with inclusion in mind. “A given number of units in each building are completely accessible. I know some of the residents in the complex do have vouchers or are subsidized in some other way. More and more new complexes are going this way.”

Because of the supports she received when first she apartment hunted years ago, Arini did not have that objective in her person-centered plan. However, “in looking for the place I’m living in now, I added my housing search to the plan and specified that my case manager would help in the search. I also said that I wanted a place that was closer to my work and was fully accessible.

“Make sure housing is part of your person-centered plan. That way, you can get those people to help you with the search and all the paperwork. They know who to talk with.”

Arini also went online and used an apartment locator service to help give her addresses. “Some of them charge you a fee, but the one I used did not – they billed the company listing the apartment.”

Lifespan Respite Care Act, with its financial possibilities, offers better respite organization and services

The Lifespan Respite Care Act provides competitive grants to aging and disability resources to make quality respite available to families and caregivers. Resource centers that win the grants must collaborate with a private or public non-profit respite coalition.

This is a federal law. It encourages a state's respite advocates and providers to organize, plan and collaborate to create a quality statewide respite program in order to win the grant money. With the grant in hand, then, the collaborators can improve, expand, streamline and bring together various respite programs from around the state.

The act is patterned after lifespan respite systems in Nebraska, Oregon, Oklahoma and Wisconsin. These programs feature easy access to flexible, quality, affordable respite services. They also train and pay respite providers.

The new law was introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives and was passed last Dec. 6. Two days later the Senate passed it and the bill became law on Dec. 21. It authorizes the Department of Health and Human Services to fund respite care for family caregivers.

The next step is funding. Congress must appropriate the money - \$40 million has been suggested – as part of the 2008 Fiscal Year budget for Labor-Health and Human Services-Education. At this time, funding doesn't seem likely. If it is, Congress may decide to follow pay-as-you-go rules.

If the money is budgeted, a Request for Proposals (RFPs) can be issued. Each state would write a proposal about how they will spend the money.

There may be additional Congressional requirements for spending the money on top of the specifications contained within the bill itself. Grants would be awarded to states on the basis of the proposals.

Respite users and other advocates are being asked to write to their U.S. representative and senators encouraging them to pass the funding legislation.

Writing the respite grant in Michigan; who'll step up?

If the money is provided, Michigan has an opportunity to acquire some of that grant money from the Lifespan Respite Care Act. It is impossible to

know what the exact requirements of the RFP will be but, according to Pam Sinnott, now's the time to assemble the information and resources that would go into writing a grant proposal, should the chance come about.

Sinnott says she is willing to step forward and plan strategy for writing the proposal, when and if that day comes. But she needs help. Sinnott is the community development coordinator with Community Living Services in Wayne.

Logically, she says, the aging and disability center in the state would coordinate the task of preparing to write the grant proposal, but says Michigan does not have such a center. "You'd think a state agency would want to consider writing the proposal, but that's not the case either."

It's not too early

Sinnott is chairperson of the Michigan Respite Resource Network, formally the Michigan Respite Coalition. She has been contacting self-advocates, state officials, supports professionals – anyone who comes to mind – to form a group to prepare for the grant proposal writing, should the opportunity arise.

Sinnott understands that respite organizations in other states have begun the preparation and believes Michigan should do the same. "Now's the time," she says. "Not being adequately prepared to request the funds for families of people with disabilities may mean that portion of the money could go to support respite for seniors instead.

"There needs to be a coalition formed representing all those who use and provide respite. It needs to be formed now and collaboration is the only way preparing for writing a successful proposal can take place. The feds need to see we're collaborating from the start. That may help determine how much money we finally get, if it is actually appropriated.

Anyone with a stake in respite care is invited to the table to help form this coalition centered around the Michigan Respite Resource Network. It meets monthly in Okemos near Lansing and Sinnott says the invitation is out to join them.

For more on the Act itself and the Respite Resource Network's meetings, contact Pam Sinnott at Community Living Services, 734-722-6364. You can email her at psinnott@comlivserv.com.

Did you know about Did You Know? Grant project kicks off gatherings

The Council grant project Did You Know? is being managed by the Developmental Disabilities Institute (DDI) at Wayne State University. Project manager is Judy Cerano, who reports great successes in the yearlong activity.

"We had our first meeting in Detroit on April 5," she says. "The second was April 19 and both were very informative and useful." That's just the beginning.

Did You Know's purpose is to inform families and supports coordinators about the Community Mental Health (CMH) structure, Medicaid-funded services, family supports, waivers, person-centered planning, self-determination, and changes in policies in Michigan. The results will improve access to services and supports for families of children with developmental disabilities.

The main activity, says Cerano, is to hold a series of meetings around the state to inform and update families. The two Detroit meetings are the first of those to be held around the state. Meeting times are 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. with a continental breakfast in the bargain.

"At the first meeting on the 5th were more than 70 people, most of whom were family members. On the 19th, 73 showed up, the majority family members. The response was overwhelming. People came up to me and said they knew of no other way they could've gotten the information they had just received.

"Families of young children with disabilities are truly hungry for information to make their family lives better. The best way to do that is to educate

yourself. This project is unique in that it's agenda gives a parent the



More than 70 people attended the first Did You Know? session at the Sacred Heart Major Seminary in Detroit.

opportunity to not only look at what services are available right now for their child, but also what services and supports will be available as the child grows older.”

The next meeting is in Baraga County in June, followed by one in Traverse City, possibly in September. Also on the ticket are meetings in Kalamazoo. Grantees have divided the state into four sections and will hold two meetings in each section.

Cerano says among the presenters at the meetings were representatives from the local CMH and Tammy Finn from Michigan Partners for Freedom. Included was a panel discussion on a variety of vital topics. Cerano herself spoke on advocacy, while a CMH director addressed systems change.

The sessions were held at the Sacred Heart Major Seminary in Detroit.

A challenge was to get the word out to families about the meetings. “Notices were sent to intermediate school districts, along with personal calls. We contacted directors of family services at the CMHs and worked with the Wayne Regional Interagency Consumer Committee (RICC) to promote the two meetings. They did an excellent job.”

Cerano said RICC members set an excellent example in showing young family members that kids with disabilities can grow up to be happy, healthy adults with disabilities. “Family members see these adults living in, and being included as part of, the local community. This is very exciting.”

Another grant activity is creation of a project advisory committee to coordinate the statewide activities. Cerano says the membership is made

up of people from the four meeting sections, including several members of the Council's Family Support Work Group.

For more information on Did You Know?, contact Judy Cerano at DDI, 313-577-6389. Her email is: judycerano@wayne.edu.

FYI – Presenting the DD Council's annual report – the short version

Each year the Michigan Developmental Disabilities Council, per instructions from the federal government, prints a short version of its annual report.

Highlights of the previous year, including grant and Regional Interagency Consumer Committees, are reviewed. Here, for your information, is the 2006 mini-report:



Michigan DD Council - A look back at 2006

The year 2006 was not only a busy election year in Michigan, but also a year in which the Council acquired new members. Gov. Jennifer Granholm issued a new executive order (2006-12) under which the Council now operates. At the same, she appointed 13 new Council members and reappointed eight. Two Thousand Six was also important for the legislation creating the Single Point of Entry. This provides persons with disabilities easier access to long-term care and hopefully prevents unnecessary institutionalization.

Council, staff and RICC members alike were busy supporting legislative education and getting out the vote for the November elections. The October Council meeting featured an informative Candidates' Forum. The Council also held a very successful 7th Annual Legislative Reception in February. It provided a setting for self-advocates to meet with lawmakers, one-on-one.

At the September RICC Leadership Conference, motivational speaker Randy Graise told listeners to choose their own paths and not be discouraged in seeking independence as a way of life.

I s s u e s

This year saw a variety of issues affecting consumers. Among those the Council devoted itself to were state budget cuts in Medicaid services, restraints and seclusion, cultural and racial bias in outreach and services, and a public transportation crisis.

Also at issue in 2006 was the continued institutional bias in the funding of nursing homes and long-term care options. Council members agree it is better to fund home and community-based living choices. For example, the Council is enthusiastic about Cash & Counseling, a model program that can provide support toward independent living.

Through grants and work groups the Council worked to change traditional public education systems. The Council has granted over \$3 million in the past 20 years to improve educational opportunities and believes that every child deserves the best education possible, which includes Universal Education.

Funding for public transportation faced a crisis. Expenses were going up and there is a large budget shortfall, which hurt every transit system. Small systems, especially, are struggling. As a result in part from Council efforts, people from all over the state, including many people with disabilities, responded to the calls for action and told their lawmakers that they should not cut transit services.

Council sponsorship of Michigan Partners for Freedom, a grassroots movement devoted to making self-determination a reality, continued with a series of successful training sessions around the state that included a new DVD video that featured real people talking about how self-determination changed their lives for the better.

O u t r e a c h

Every fiber of the DD Council is directed toward outreach. The Council's theme is "Our community includes everyone." Council work is directed toward making each Michigan community a place where all residents have choices in how they wish to live, work and play. Council advocacy efforts are directed toward systems that affect the lives of people with developmental disabilities. Success is measured by changing those systems supporting people with developmental disabilities to live the lives they choose. Council outreach took many forms in 2006. Among them, the annual Legislative Reception in February, the Family Day Council meeting

in July, and a series of RICC regional meetings intended to help members plan for the future.

G r a n t s

Once again, the Council's grants provided a means of showing new approaches for a positive impact on people's lives. Grants are usually awarded through a request-for-proposals system. Among those grants in operation during the year were Transportation Voucher (provides independence for transit-dependent people), Coordinated Care Models (encourages continuity of care and improved access throughout the lifespan of people with disabilities), Community Employment (new approaches toward employment of people with disabilities) and Parent Support Networks for School Inclusion (to build local support networks for parents of children with disabilities).

W o r k G r o u p s a n d C o m m i t t e e s

The Council's work is done through the efforts of its work groups and committees. Members of these groups are people with disabilities, Council staff, advocates, and professionals who are knowledgeable about the work groups' and committees' particular topics.

The work groups and committees serve to create opportunities for the development of sound advocacy, community capacity building, and program development that makes the Council more effective in its efforts to advance systems change. Work groups are: Education, Family Support, Transportation, Health, and Housing. Committees are: Program, Public Policy, and Multicultural. Membership in each is open to the public.

R I C C s

Regional Interagency Consumer Committee (RICC) members were successful in local grassroots activities throughout the state. The number of RICCs remained about the same – 50 – but their presence and strength increased....they figured strongly in local issues and joined the Council in forging systems change. RICC members worked hard to get out the vote in '06 with emphasis on getting informed about key issues and meeting with the candidates.

One major RICC event in 2006 was the Leadership Development Conference that focused on self-determination. More than 150 RICC

leaders and members attended. It was a great success. The Council held a series of regional meetings to help foster working relationships among neighboring RICCs. Plans called for additional regional meetings in 2007. Agenda items included diversity outreach and work plans that make a difference.

RICCs are designed to bring together people in a particular area or community who see the need for collaboration, who understand that many voices can be much louder than just one.

MICHIGAN DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES COUNCIL
1033 S. Washington Ave., Lansing, MI, 48910
517-334-6123 (voice) – 517-334-7353 (fax)
www.michigan.gov/ddcouncil

- OUR COMMUNITY INCLUDES EVERYONE! -

DD Council work group and committee meeting minutes

Multicultural Committee

April 9, 2007

Present:

Terrie Hylton (chair, phone); Jacqueline Day; Rick Van Horn; Yasmina Bouraoui; Sophie Baker; Patrick McSherry; Mae Golden; James Gulley; Mitzi Allen; Sylvia Elliot; James Gulley; Duncan Wyeth.

Call to Order: At 1:14 p.m. by Chairperson Hylton.

March meeting minutes approved.

Agenda approved.

New business:

A - Sylvia Elliott from the Michigan Department of Civil Rights opened the meeting. She gave a brief overview on the report documenting the impact of Proposal 06-02. The investigation and subsequent report was at the direction of the Governor.

The report is the result of a three-month investigation. Elliott said her talk today included three objectives: (a) to understand the importance of diversity to Michigan, (b) understand the potential impact of Proposal 2, and (c) to understand the next steps.

According to Elliott, the results of the Civil Rights investigation included the following findings among the 17-point summary she distributed:

1. Proposal 2 does not eliminate all affirmative action and affirmative action programs but only those that grant preferential treatment based on race, sex, color, ethnicity, and national origin in the operation of public employment, public education, and public contracting.
2. Proposal 2 does not end equal opportunity or the critical pursuit of diversity and inclusion in the State of Michigan. Neither does it mean that the terms “race” or “sex” are banished from the official state vocabulary.
3. If preference is based on disability, Proposal 2 does not apply.

The full 74-page report is available on the Civil Rights website: www.michigan.gov/mdcr.

Elliott announced a hate crimes seminar in Flint on May 3.

Old Business

A. Allen reported the poster committee is scheduled to meet Friday, April 13 at 1 p.m. Next steps will be discussed.

B. Baker and Van Horn reported on the new Committee work plan format. Basically the plan structure has been reduced in size and simplified. Hylton and Committee members liked and approved the new format. Golden said it was easier to read for someone with restricted vision.

Allen suggested including meeting dates on the plan. Wyeth would like to see a definition of cultural competency added to the document....two or three sentences at most. A discussion of the value of cultural competency as a term followed. Committee members agreed to discuss the issue at a future meeting.

Next step for the work plan format is to seek Executive Committee approval. If that occurs, the format will be used by each Council work group and committee.

C. Magazine advertising: No decision has been made regarding this project. Is this advertising worth \$500? Baker sees no value in advertising in a magazine with limited circulation. A better medium might be church bulletins. Allen will ask the publisher of Adelante Magazine to get more information before a decision is made on advertising.

Wyeth suggested being added to existing links on multicultural websites – websites that already service that community....and it would be free. Hylton asked Van Horn to look into this with Cristo Rey.

D. Diversity Coordinator involvement: should they attend Committee meetings by phone? Baker reminded the group that coordinators are volunteers and while there needs to be rules, not too many. What do they get out of phoning into a Committee meeting?

Golden said to invite RICC chairs to Committee meetings. A review of ideally what coordinators should be doing for outreach was brought out.

Hylton suggested sending a letter to coordinators asking them to join the Committee for at least three meetings a year, in person or by phone. Allen pointed out that letter had already been sent. Allen said call them direct to make them take ownership and survey....what does your outreach program look like? Do you have one?....what's going on?

Gulley said many advocacy organizations in his area have trouble even getting family members to show up for meetings that benefit them.

Wyeth said outreach as defined by the Committee and as a task assigned to diversity coordinators sounds a lot like missionary work. The real

question is: how can you learn more, in your current role, about other groups in your community?

Hylton suggested dividing the list of coordinators with each Committee member taking some names and calling the coordinators. Also, as part of a RICCs role as host of a DD Council meeting, have that RICC's coordinator report on activities.

E. Where are we going? In terms of the work plan and next year's activities. Hylton said the topics of this meeting are some of the main items...developing a definition of cultural competency, being a link on websites, making friends and working with the coordinators in terms of their reporting out and buying into the system, helping to establish the Council as a brand, doing a public service announcement with a celebrity. Bring ideas to the May meeting.

Family Support Work Group

March 21, 2007

Members Present: Audrey Craft
Via Phone: Pam Sinnott, Judy Cerano
Staff: Tracy Vincent

The minutes from the February meeting were tabled and will be approved at the April meeting.

Pam Sinnott gave the group an update on the Michigan Respite Resource Network; formally know as the Michigan Respite Coalition. The next meeting of the Respite Resource Network is March 22 at the Meridian Senior Center in Okemos. Roseann Percival from Oklahoma Resource Respite Network will be joining the March 22nd meeting to discuss the process that the Oklahoma Respite Network went through to build their coalition and to access funding for respite.

Pam has been in contact with Mike Head who has assigned a staff person to track and monitor the status of the National Lifespan Respite Act. Once the Lifespan Respite Act is funded, each state will have an opportunity to respond to an RFP in order to access this additional respite funding.

Pam is making final touches to the Michigan Respite Resource Network website. She will inform us when it is in operation.

The Lifespan Respite Act bill was passed in both the House and Senate and President Bush signed it in late December. They are in the process of getting lawmakers to sign onto it to promote it being funded. They are asking for an authorization level of \$40 million in FY2008 appropriations.

Audrey gave an update on the Autism Spectrum Disorder Work Group. The last meeting was February 7, 2007. They have given several presentations on the draft recommendations, including to the Association of Community Mental Health Board Directors. They have scheduled to present the recommendations to the Michigan Association for Education of Young Children in March. The next phase is the implementation process. The approved recommendations are posted on the ASD website, www.cenmi.org/asd.

Lori finalized the parent surveys so they will be sent to rapid copy for printing. A list of organizations was developed and Tracy will work on getting 25-30 to each organization. It was suggested to follow-up with the organizations after the surveys are sent.

Planning for the July 10th Council meeting will be on the April agenda. There were not enough members present to have a full discussion. Judy Cerano will give an update on the Did You Know? Project. Tracy will contact council members who represent secondary consumers to find out what topics they would like the group to address.

Public Policy Committee

April 10, 2007

Present

Jane Spitzley, Jacqui Day, Vera Graham, Paul Palmer, Rob Lewakowski, Judy Webb, Elmer Cerano, Tandy Bidinger, Terry Hunt .

Welcome/Introductions

The meeting was called to order at 9:02 am. Jane Spitzley chaired the meeting due to the absence of Chair Andre Robinson.

Approval of Minutes from November meetings

Paul Palmer moved that the minutes from the March meeting be accepted. Judy Webb seconded. CARRIED.

Federal Updates

There is great controversy surrounding the defense budget that Congress is sending to President Bush. President Bush has stated he plans to veto this bill.

State Updates

The state is experiencing a budget crisis. Everyday the budget deficit goes unresolved the State gets further and further in debt. If the budget is not resolved by June 1, it is possible that the state will shut down government offices.

The Senate Community Health Subcommittee will be holding a series of hearings. All hearings will begin at 2:00 pm in the first floor hearing room of Boji Tower, 124 W. Allegan, Lansing.

The hearing dates are as follows;

April 19, 2007 - Medicaid.

April 26, 2007 - Mental Health

May 3, 2007 - Public Health and Office of Services to the Aging

May 17, 2007 - Decisions on FY 2007-08

It is of utmost importance that individuals turn out at the hearing to testify and let your legislator know how cutting services would negatively impact your life.

ACTION ALERT: Communicate with your legislators. Let them know what cuts to services would mean to you and your quality of life. If you are willing to pay a small tax increase for quality of life, let them know.

Public Policy Seminar D.C.

DD Council staff, Terry Hunt, Council member, Paul Palmer

and Genesee RICC member, Mae Golden attended the 2007 Disability Public Policy Seminar in Washington D.C. A fact sheet on numerous issues was distributed and is an excellent source of information and will be distributed to all. The PPC will be creating a Public Policy Platform and the fact sheets will be an excellent tool in developing this platform.

Legislative Event Debrief/future Plans

There will be a meeting tomorrow April 11, 2007 at 1:30. This will be the wrap up meeting for the February 2007 event and kick-off for planning the 2008 event.

Transportation Work Group

April 12, 2007

PRESENT : Jacqui Day, Diane Kempen, Paul Palmer, Caren Miller, JoAnn Lucas, MaLissa Shutt, Pam Hall

Staff

Tandy Bidinger, Dee Florence

VIA PHONE:

Ontonagon:

Washtenaw: Erin McMahon, Melissa Anderson

Eastern UP: Kori Horrom, Jon Browicheski, Charlene Klip

Kent Co.:

Wayne:

Approval of Minutes

JoAnn Lucas moved that the March 2007 minutes be approved as presented. Paul Palmer seconded.

Legislative Update

The House Transportation Committee will be holding a committee meeting regarding public transportation on April 17, 2007. The meeting will be at the House Office Building room 308 at 2:30 pm. Jackie Shinn from MDOT and Clark Harder from the MI Public Transit Association will be giving a presentation.

The MI budget issue is still not resolved. Each day the deficit gets larger and larger. Please contact your legislators and tell them you want no more cuts to public transportation!

An additional 9 cent tax on gas has been proposed to generate additional funds. Most of the funds generated would be used to improve roads, but a small amount would be for public transit.

T-Shirt Update

Consumers will be asked to pay \$2 to receive a T-shirt and professionals will be asked to pay \$10. RICCs are asked to collect the funds for their RICC members and mail in everyone's money on one check. The check should be made out to "Northfield Human Services" and mailed to the DD Council Office at:

Michigan DD Council
Attn: Dee Florence
1033 S. Washington Ave.
Lansing, MI 48909

We can also accept cash, if it is hand delivered.

Review of April DD Council Transportation Themed Meeting

The theme for the April DD Council meeting was transportation. The voucher projects gave presentations that portrayed great success stories. DDI offered a great talk on advocacy and how to become empowered. UCP presented about the new "All Aboard" Transportation grant.

LAC Updates

BATTLE CREEK

The head of public transit from the Battle Creek area attended the RICC meeting and talked with members to hear their concerns about the LAC and public transit. The LAC will now have meeting every quarterly meetings and meet face to face with the RICC when they have concerns.

HURON

A consumer member of the Huron RICC has been appointed to their LAC.

CAPITOL AREA

Paul Palmer is a member of the CATA LAC. Capitol Area RICC members always attend the meetings and are still asking for holiday travel. CATA is still taking this under consideration.

SHIAWASSEE

A member of the Shiawassee RICC applied to be appointed to the LAC after attending a transportation advocacy workshop. Diane Kempen and Glen Ashley did a presentation at that workshop.

MDOT State Long-Range Transportation Plan

MDOT's Long-Range Transportation Plan will establish a vision and policy framework for Michigan's transportation system through the year 2030. The proposed plan is posted on MDOT's website. Consumers are asked to read over the plan and submit comments. Please read, review, and comment on the plan at www.michigan.gov/slrp.

TWG Work Plan

The current work plan expires on September 30th and needs to be updated. A TWG meeting in the near future will be devoted entirely to create a new work plan.

March Traffic Safety Conference Presentation

Tandy Bidinger participated at this conference on a panel that discussed alternative transportation. She gave a presentation on the voucher program and the great success that it has had.

August TWG Traveling Meeting

The TWG has a traveling meeting once a year. This year the meeting will again be in conjunction with a RICC regional meeting. Tentative plans are being made to hold the meeting in Gaylord in August.

Success Stories

Wayne: A Detroit newspaper ran a frontpage story on a Sunday morning talking about the 5 most violent bus routes in Detroit. This created a controversy and now security on public transit busses is being looked into by the transit agency.

Muskegon/Newaygo

A participant of the voucher program used the vouchers to attend drivers training classes and now has a license.

Shiawassee

The Shiawassee RICC held a Transportation Advocacy Workshop. There was a great turnout and individuals who attended the workshop left fired up to advocate for public transportation.

Teleconference Rules:

All RICCs are encouraged to participate in the TWG teleconference. Due to the large number of individuals interested in calling in, and the limited funding allocated to the TWG, ground rules have been set. They are as follows:

- The Teleconference site must be at a public place.
- There should be at least two consumers participating in the call.
- RICCs must RSVP in advance so that meeting materials can be sent to you in before the meeting, and that we can let others from your area know where the phone site is.
- RSVP to Dee Florence at 517-334-6123 or florenced1@michigan.gov

Michigan Housing Disability Network

April 12, 2007

ATTENDEES:

Cheryl Trommater, Jacqui Day, Paul Palmer, Johnathon Raiss, Sue Hart, Edward Kibbe, Carl Fenner, Chris Hodgson, Zakiyyah Muhammed, Paul Ecklund, Nelson Grit, Frank Lynn, Sandi Keirnan, Jill Geri.

OSU/ADA MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES CONFERENCE:

Paul Ecklund and Sue Hart attended the conference with funding from a MDRC cookie grant and DN-M.

The advocates from Ohio were excited about our getting a State IHDA passed and are going to get with us when they get their organizations together to work on it soon.

MICHIGAN CONFERENCE ON AFFORDABLE HOUSING:

Michigan Housing and Community Development Fund: Nelson attended a public hearing in the House of Reps. on this fund. Their goal is to get \$100 million in this fund. They are having an advocacy day on Wednesday, May 2nd at noon at the Capitol Building. If you want to attend and get a free lunch you can register at livinginmichigan.org. If you want to attend and get a free lunch you can register at livinginmichigan.org. They said that there will be transportation provided by Habitat For Humanity. Frank was trying to figure out the transportation issue on where, whom, who.

PA 182 PRESENTATION AT THE CONFERENCE:

Paul has talked to Jim Davis from MSHDA regarding the language of the act, the interpretation, and the enforcement. MSHDA'S REPRESENTATIVES, Gary Heidel and Michael De Vos is sending the act to their attorneys to get an idea of how it should be. So, when Carolyn Grawi does her presentation to CEDAM and we do ours at the conference we will just tell them that MSHDA is working on the interpretation and we will get back when we know what the bottom line is that seems to be a bedroom on the main floor. Paul will get with Carolyn and give her the information for her training at CEDAM on 4/17/07. Paul will also be facilitating another conference call on 4/16/07 on the PA 182 presentation at the conference. ZSAM will have a presentation and also a booth. The ZSAM team members have already volunteered their time to staff the booth.

The Corrie Bair Building Inclusive Communities Award winner is Habitat of Kent County and Sue will get a hold of MDRC to have a plaque ready for the awards luncheon on Tuesday's lunch.

We discussed whether MI DD Council will have a booth this year. Cheryl will look into it and get back with Sue.

Education Work Group

April 25, 2007

Attendance: Jane Spitzley, Glenn Ashley, Patt Clement, Sandee Koski,
Esther Onaga, Yasmina Bouraoui, Rick Van Horn
Phone: Karen Massaro-Mundt, Stacey Diekevers, Jane Reagan

1.) Stacey moved to accept the March 28, 2007 minutes. Jane S. seconded, and the motion carried.

2.) Review and Discussion of May 8 Council meeting program.

The program was distributed. The format for the overall council meeting agenda was changed, starting the last council meeting. Committee and council reports are interspersed throughout the day to make the reports more interesting.

Karen will be the Emcee for the program.

Presentation 1

Patt will be talking about the proposed state rules, and a summary of the rules that are amended. The hearing officers section has been deleted.

Jane R will move at the Council meeting to add the PowerPoint to the agenda right before lunch, after Council reports. Jane will read the presentation.

Presentation 2

Stacey will be doing a presentation about the Everyone Together networks. Sandee will be doing the part on Universal Education. Sandee has 200 copies of the MDE handout on Universal Education to distribute at the meeting.

Presentation 3

Sandee received something this morning called "The Guide" NASDDDS Handbook on Inclusive Meetings and Presentations. It explains the theory, and focuses on meetings more than presentations.

Glenn drafted an outline of strategies for presentations, which is focused on practical tips, and less about meetings.

Sandee and Karen talked about using contrasting examples of what works and what doesn't. They could refer to pages on the handout for people who learn from written materials.

An open discussion about the issue, getting other people's ideas about how it worked, to demonstrate another point from the Tips. Project

Pull in slides and illustrations from other presentations to demonstrate the principles.

At end, point out that Council's technology does not support accessible presentations. The projector is too dim, and we are using borrowed equipment.

Jane R moved that the Education Work Group ask that the council purchase a laptop computer with the most current software, an LCD projector and a DVD player for use by the council, work groups and committees. And that the Education Work Group chair send a letter to the council explaining how the technology gap is impeding our ability to make our meetings accessible. Jane S. seconded, and the motion carried.

Presentation 4

The focus of the presentation is the outcome of the grant. The mini-summit is not the focus of the presentation. Reviewing the grant, then going into the policy issues (finance) that people have been refusing to face. Future policy action that the council can take is important.

3.) Discussion of April 23 Early Childhood Inclusion Mini-Summit

130 people attended. It included 22 parents, teachers, preschool and school staff and other interested people. After a welcome by Esther, Stefanie Kujazynski talked about her experiences including children in the classroom, as well as resistance.

A panel of the Spartan Child Development Center and Galileo Preschool parents and staff told about their inclusive settings and parent involvement.

The afternoon was a panel on policy issues, but some of the speakers could not make it, so the sessions were not what they could have been.

There was a concurrent session on using the IEP to secure inclusion. They talked about the big picture reasons for inclusion, describing their experiences. They showed pictures of their children with other kids in high school and middle school activities.

Esther passed out the responses from the evaluation. Most of the people thought it was valuable, and knowledge was increased. The most

disappointing part was the lack of information about finance and policy part in the afternoon session.

4.) Other business

Symposium on Post-Secondary Education for Students with Disabilities. It is planned for the end of October. It would have a mixed audience, covering a range of topics, from basics about the concepts, to how to get a program started, or get students to participate.

Sandee Koski will present information on the Michigan Alliance for Families at a future meeting.

Rick passed out a copy of the workplan template that we will be using this coming year. We will need to have the workplan completed and in use by October 1.

5.) Update membership information

The list is very long, and needs to be reviewed to see who no longer needs to be on it, or if the information is correct. Sandee Koski needs to be added.

6.) Announcements

Health Issues Work Group

March 20, 2007

Members present: Theresa Arini, Jacqui Day

Members via phone: Mary Marin

Staff: Terry Hunt, Dee Florence, Yasmina Bouraoui

The minutes from the February 2007 meeting were accepted as presented.

Status of Care Coordination Project

Members felt talking with project staff was useful and that we should attempt to schedule quarterly meetings. Terry will talk with Cheryl about this.

Status of Oral Health Project

A bidders conference was held February 7, 2007 with several individuals/agencies participating. Many people have contacted Cheryl with additional questions about the RFP. Proposals are due in April.

Medicaid: Our Neighbors, Our Community

Linda Potter showed the DVD with two different versions of the ending. The HIWG chose the one they preferred. A few edits to the credits are still needed. The video's final version should be completed shortly. Members discussed what information will be given to those who contact us for further information regarding Medicaid. Suggestions included, putting the information on the DDC website, linking to the "Get Active" website to write to your legislator, etc. Linda will explore options regarding "Get Active." Linda is working with Message Makers on the PSAs and she will begin work on the discussion guide to accompany the video. Once the video is finalized, Terry and Theresa will contact the Michigan Health and Hospital Association to explore options for collaboration regarding their Faces of Medicaid video.

April 11, 2007 Networking/Collaboration Meeting

A meeting has been planned for April 11, 2007 for all work groups and committees. Leaders and members are encouraged to attend. This will be an opportunity for the groups to explore ways they can collaborate.